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articles published in "Défense  
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Several articles have been translated into  
English by students at **ISIT Paris**.

Our deepest thanks to Mrs Christine  
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newsletter.

## Editorial

*A first version of this editorial was published  
early April in "Defense Européenne" No. 64,  
and amended for this newsletter to reflect EU  
developments until 19 April 2019.*

With little over a month to go to the  
European elections and at a time when the  
talk in Brussels should be about the future of  
Europe, the reforms needed to improve the  
way it operates and better protect its citizens,  
its vision and response to major contemporary  
challenges such as preserving the planet for  
future generations or migration issues, it is  
Brexit that sadly continues to hog centre  
stage.

While the negotiators for the European  
Union and the United Kingdom may have  
agreed on reasonable terms, in particular over  
the thorny and seemingly inextricable Irish  
border issue, largely because of the  
consistently united front presented by the 27  
EU Member States, the UK Parliament still has  
to ratify the agreement despite sterling efforts  
on the part of Theresa May. She returned from  
her most recent visit to Brussels with the offer  
of an extension to the deadline to 31 October,  
with the proviso that failure to organise  
European elections in the UK in May would  
lead to automatic "no deal" exclusion on 1  
June. Clearly, all bets are off with regard to the  
final chapter of this sorry tale.

While all this has been going on, EU  
Member States have failed to reach  
agreement on the reform of European  
immigration policies (migration package  
proposed by the Commission), in spite of the  
Commission's decision to withdraw reform of  
the so-called Dublin Regulation, at least for the  
time being. The one positive development is  
the European Parliament's decision at its final  
meeting on 15 April to strengthen the  
European Border and Coast Guard corps. For  
its part, Operation Sophia in the  
Mediterranean was saved in extremis by the



EU Council's approval on 29 March of the  
decision to extend the operation for a further  
six months through to 30 September 2019.

There is, however, one area where  
progress is being made, namely defence. The  
main issue for the moment is the draft  
regulation on the European Defence Fund  
(EDF) against the backdrop of financial  
prospects for the period from 2021 to 2027.  
Provisional political agreement was reached  
by the representatives of Member States and  
the European Commission at the end of March  
with the third arm of the trio, Parliament,  
casting its positive vote on the subject on 18  
April just ahead of the European elections.  
There remain, however, two outstanding  
issues, namely the budget, which is contingent  
upon a solution being found for overall budget  
allocations for the 2021-2027 period and for  
the question of extension to third countries  
(Article 5), a highly sensitive topic heavily  
dependent on the final upshot of Brexit  
negotiations. While full agreement cannot be  
expected before the end of 2019, the fact that  
provisional agreement has been reached is a  
major step forward in itself.

Another encouraging development was the  
approval on 19 March of the European  
Defence Industrial Development Programme  
(EDIDP)'s 2019-2020 programme of work, this  
being the precursor to the EDF. Of the €500  
million given the green light, €137 million have  
been earmarked for two large-scale projects,  
the MALE (medium altitude drone) and  
ESSOR (European secure software)  
programmes, management of which has been  
entrusted to the Organisation for Joint  
Armament Cooperation (OCCAR), which is  
excellent news.

**Patrick Bellouard**

*Major General (Engineer, retired).*

**President of EuroDéfense-France**

# European defence for enhanced citizen protection

By a panel of EuroDéfense-France Board members

Published in "La Tribune" on March 5, 2019

**An independent European defence industry, in which the roles would be shared and the impact on employment negotiated by common accord and which, by corollary, would be the "go to" source of supply for all EU countries whenever possible, would enable Europe's citizens to enjoy the benefits of safety and efficiency at all levels (operational, economic, social and in terms of international political leverage).**

The wave of Islam terrorist attacks sweeping across France and other parts of Europe has fuelled a greater awareness among our fellow citizens of a new type of threat directly linked with outside structures that we, as a nation, cannot hope to contain, making greater cooperation among Europeans a matter of growing necessity.

The November 2018 Eurobarometer, with considerable regularity, showed that 76 % of Europe's citizens, the French public included, support the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP), which represents the nucleus of a European defence response. Their support was based on their intuition feeling that there is "strength in numbers" and that European countries share a common past, culture, geography and values and therefore have a common destiny. This goes beyond their individual interests and points to the need to join forces and establish common defence resources to achieve a degree of common strategic autonomy.



Source: Le Républicain Lorrain - 7 February 2014

## European defence as a guarantee of strategic autonomy

Admittedly, Member States may have different approaches, usually more political than truly strategic in nature, and do not all have the same understanding of the objective of strategic autonomy, as set out in the new global strategy for the European Union's Foreign and Security Policy approved by the European Council in June 2016. This fundamental target, which should systematically prompt common industrial and operational efforts, is still hamstrung both by the position of Member States, who mistakenly think that European defence structures could undermine the protection offered by NATO, and by more immediate local issues, such as investment or employment, or even national rules or customs with regard to

deployment of forces, which have an adverse effect on overall efficiency.

Yet European defence worthy of the name has to be rooted in a European Defence Technological and Industrial Base (EDTIB) capable of ensuring strategic autonomy and, in particular, providing the Europeans with equipment free of the restrictions imposed by non-European suppliers. If there were an independent European defence industry, in which the roles would be shared and the impact on employment negotiated by common accord and which, by corollary, would be the "go to" source of supply for all EU countries whenever possible, this would ensure that Europe's citizens could enjoy the benefits of safety and efficiency at all levels (operational, economic, social and in terms of international political leverage).

## The issue of political will

To embark on the process of developing European defence, there is no need to amend existing treaties or undertake complex and time-consuming negotiations. The necessary tools already exist and all that is required is the political will to put them into application. Article 42 of the Lisbon Treaty makes this patently clear:

*"The common security and defence policy shall be an integral part of the common foreign and security policy. It shall provide the Union with an operational capacity drawing on civilian and military assets. The Union may use them on missions outside the Union for peace-keeping, conflict prevention and strengthening international security in accordance with the principles of the United Nations Charter. The performance of these tasks shall be undertaken using capabilities provided by the Member States. The common security and defence policy shall include the progressive framing of a common Union defence policy. This will lead to a common defence, when the European Council, acting unanimously, so decides. It shall in that case recommend to the Member States the adoption of such a decision in accordance with their respective constitutional requirements. The policy of the Union in accordance with this Section shall not prejudice the specific character of the security and defence policy of certain Member States and shall respect the obligations of certain Member States, which see their common defence realised in the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), under the North Atlantic Treaty and be compatible with the common security and defence policy established within that framework"....*

It is clear from this quotation that under the Lisbon Treaty, which came into force in December 2009, it is perfectly possible to develop European Union operational capabilities under conditions compatible with the United Nations charter and without flouting Member States' undertakings under the North Atlantic Treaty. Some thirty missions have already been successfully undertaken by the European Union under these conditions (the first of which were under the previous treaty).

# European defence for enhanced citizen protection

(Cont. from P. 2)

## European needs to present a united front to counter the complex manoeuvres of the major powers

Since 2016, the pace of developing European defence has increased by leaps and bounds under the global strategy quoted above, and a number of major new instruments have



Source: www.bbc.co.uk

Photo credit: Reuters

emerged. Europe desperately needs to present a common front to counter the world's most recent developments, in places fraught with instabilities, for example the Middle East, North Africa, Central Africa or parts of Asia, with growing Jihadist influence, civil wars, recurrent conflicts, migratory populations and the complex games played by major powers such as the USA (which has recently adopted positions embarrassing to the Europeans, to say the least), China or Russia, not forgetting the ongoing Brexit saga. Europe needs to sing from the same hymn sheet, show its solidarity and flex its muscles to ward off all potential threats. Fortunately, many of the Member States have seen the light, as borne out by the recent decisions to consolidate and improve Common Security and Defence Policy structures, a source of potential satisfaction in themselves.

At the end of 2017, the European Council decided to embark on Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) with regard to defence, since this affords the chance to strengthen links between volunteer States under the terms of the Lisbon Treaty. So far, 25 Member States have signed up for PESCO by agreeing on a common list of criteria and commitments. Given the number of subscribers, this PESCO is perhaps less ambitious than some may have wished but it is important in that it will start the ball rolling and ensure that the 34 mainly capability-related projects proposed by the States can go ahead without delay.

### A common command structure to plan and run operations

The Council has also started work on a coordinated annual review on defence (CARD) in order better to identify European capability shortfalls and requirements.

It has also established a Military Planning and Conduct Capability (MPCC) within the EU Military Staff, a move long awaited on its part.

Last but not least, the European Commission has made provision in the EU budget for a European Defence Fund (EDF), earmarking 13 billion euros over 7 years from 2021. This fund represents a major breakthrough and has two parts,

one focussing on research, the other on capabilities. It should prove conducive to collaborative development of common European systems.

These new possibilities designed to boost the EU's efficiency, and combined with the European Intervention Initiative (E2I) proposed by France in a bid to strengthen operational cooperation between volunteer States (10 at this stage), should breathe new life into European solidarity security and defence. While this may indeed constitute progress, we cannot afford to let matters rest there.



Source: www.euractiv.fr

Photo credit: EPA/MANU

## Taking military coordination and interoperability still further

We need to take our military coordination and interoperability still further and reinforce our security and intelligence structures. More than anything, we need to commit ourselves firmly to working towards a European strategic culture, in which allowance would be made for all European security concerns, those of northern European countries (under renewed threat from Russia), southern European countries (faced with threats from Africa and the Middle East) by producing a European White Paper on security and defence. It is vital that there should be a common, comprehensive, collective approach to security among European countries. This would foster greater cohesion and solidarity among the European nations themselves and, at the same time, shore up the European arm of the Atlantic Alliance.

To show the importance attached by the future European Parliament to growing demand from European citizens for a more protective Europe, setting up a specific "Common Security and Defence" Committee could send a strong and positive response.

To conclude, the foundations have been laid, the challenges identified and the requirements in terms of catalogued capabilities and new instruments have been ascertained. It now only needs the political determination to transform Europe's defence into a truly European Defence in line with wishes of its citizens. This will be one of the issues to be addressed in the upcoming European Parliament elections and is why EuroDéfense is so keen to inform electors of these challenges, which are vital for the future of Europe, and of the need to keep a careful eye on the proposals made by the political parties standing for election.

# Digital space safety and security - A major issue

By **Jean-Paul Paloméros**, French Air Force General (retired)  
Former NATO Supreme Commander for Transformation (2012-2015)  
Former French Air Force Chief of Staff (2009-2012)

In March 2017, the inventor of the worldwide web, Briton Tim Berners-Lee, published an article in which he advocated that “the web” should remain a “free and egalitarian space, a tool serving all of humanity”<sup>1</sup>. In this article, he recalled the underlying motivation behind his original 1989 proposals, namely that of creating an open platform, a place where “everyone, everywhere” would be able to “share information, access opportunities, and collaborate across geographic and cultural boundaries.” In particular, he underlined his concern regarding the way the web was evolving by identifying three worrying trends: loss of control over our personal data and the resulting invasion of our privacy, the excessive ease with which misinformation can be spread on the web, and the threat to democracy of online political advertising. He concluded by insisting on the need to wage a relentless battle to keep the web an open platform. To do so, we must work hand in hand with the giant American web companies, collectively known as GAFAM<sup>2</sup>, to agree on ways of curbing these risks while fighting against centralised state control with the potential to threaten our individual freedoms.

latent viruses, are not necessarily instantly detectable; they can



Source : Internet Safety for Kids and Families - <https://Internetsafety.trendmicro.com/>



Source : [www.nice.fr](http://www.nice.fr)

This message from one of the inventors of today’s digital society reveals a very real phenomenon that its founders could never have imagined at the time. In other words, the birth and exponential growth of not only a simple network of interconnections, but also of a whole new digital environment with its own life, interchanges, communications, and a hotbed of competition, influence, confrontation, conducive to the development of organised crime and all types of trafficking. Today it would probably be more appropriate for this cyberspace to be called the “infosphere” since this would better represent its scale and scope of application, not least the two rapidly expanding fields of IoT (the Internet of Things) and AI (Artificial Intelligence). Irrespective of its name, digital space boasts specific characteristics that largely explain the difficulties encountered in keeping it under control, in ensuring cyber security – a crucial issue for our societies, countries, companies and, increasingly, our daily lives. For example, cyberattacks - the accepted term - such as implantation of

be activated remotely when deemed most appropriate. Crucially, identifying and naming the perpetrators of cyberattacks is extremely difficult due to the anonymity afforded by Internet. Even if countries and organisations equipped with sophisticated intelligence resources are able to locate them, it is still not easy specifically to identify the individuals concerned because “hackers”, whether isolated, semi-state or even government groups, take full advantage of the ambiguities between physical individuals and their virtual clones offered by cyberspace. This last point is crucial since national and international law is largely based on identifying and prosecuting the perpetrators of wrongdoings. Moreover, this new digital space is not homogeneous, since it is a humungous mixture of substrate and substance, the resources and systems essential to its existence, its use, microprocessors, computers, networks, routers, operating software, storage facilities etc., as well as all the data, information and messages that they serve to convey, exchange and store. Any cyber-security policies must therefore focus on identifying the weak link in the human-digital chain. This is why the most significant cyber-security leaks known to date were more the result of conscious human deeds<sup>3</sup>, in other words actions akin to basic theft or espionage, rather than of sophisticated infiltration and remote data collection techniques. That said, the need for an effective cyber-security policy is heightened by the ease with which vast sources of information can be accessed and instantly mined. This type of policy should include surveillance, access control and authorisation procedures as well as technical measures for encrypting, prioritising and distributing databases (cloud computing), and provision of efficient self-checking systems.

Cyberspace is heterogeneous, which poses major problems for cooperation between states and countries. This is the case

<sup>1</sup> Tim Berners-Lee: Webfoundation Tribune 12.03.2017

<sup>2</sup> Google (now Alphabet), Apple, Facebook, Amazon, Microsoft

<sup>3</sup> For example, the leakage of Eternal Blue vulnerability, an exploit developed by NSA

## Digital space safety and security - A major issue

(Cont. from P. 4)

in Europe but even more importantly for any form of transatlantic alliance. Each of the areas mentioned is nationally extremely sensitive and any attempt at international cooperation requires a high level of competence and trust as well as extensive non-disclosure agreements that are easier to establish bilaterally than multilaterally. Where transatlantic cooperation is concerned, this situation is very favourable to the United States, since it can define different terms for relations with each of its individual partners. This in turn undermines any efforts to produce consistent European cyber-security policy. A situation only exacerbated by the lack of international regulations in this area.

In practice, the multifarious nature of cyberspace, its exponential growth, the challenges it raises in terms of its power and scope for innovation, and the resulting differences of opinion between the various governmental and individual players, stand in the way of international standardisation. Admittedly, the technical standards on which the development of digital activities is based have culminated in a number of international agreements, mainly in telecommunications, largely because this sector existed well before the web came on the scene. However, on the whole, it must be acknowledged that it is the major internet players who have the upper hand since they lay down new standards and decide whether or not to make them compatible. On the other hand, cyberspace itself is not governed by regulations, unlike land, sea, air or exo-atmospheric communications. In all these areas, a certain

which is pursuing an ambitious strategy geared towards conquering the "infosphere" via Alibaba and Tencent.

To date, the seven internet giants mentioned above are among the 10 largest companies in terms of their stock market value, with Apple, as could be expected, having just topped the 1,000 billion dollar mark, putting it around 15th position worldwide in terms of GDP. These infosphere giants, therefore, are fully-fledged powers in their own right, as they are in direct contact with nearly 2 billion users whom they can identify, locate, inform and influence, constantly mining their data, which has become the "digital oil" or DNA of the 21st century. The notable lack of European companies in this group is a major handicap in international digital competition and precludes all chances of coming up with alternative models that would reduce Europe's dependence on the infosphere giants and major powers that are the US, China and, in terms of informational influence strategy, Russia. Under these conditions, it is highly unrealistic to talk of European and even less of national digital sovereignty. This does not mean that France and the other European countries cannot protect themselves against cyber-threats and try to preserve their digital space. However, if they are to do so, they will need to form a united front and forge strategic partnerships. But, with whom? With one or more of these private giants? With countries, such as India or Brazil, that are essentially in a similar position? With China or Russia, but on what basis? Or with the Americans, who until recently were considered a natural ally within the Atlantic Alliance, but are they still? For that matter, in an increasingly digital world, is it possible to separate cyber-security issues from those of defence, security and sovereignty? Infosphere attacks, Russia's so-called hybrid strategy in Ukraine, the misuse of social media by extremist groups or even by politicians<sup>5</sup> are bound to constitute a growing proportion of tomorrow's conflicts. Action taken against the nuclear research facilities in Iran are just the tip of the iceberg when it comes to future methods of offensive action in the digital battle arena. Repeated attacks on key infrastructures in the US or Europe and the use of digital space to political ends are clearly just the precursors of the major risks that lie ahead, and which will require individual and collective responses.

Tim Berners-Lee and many others are right in urging us to protect the invaluable asset that is Internet, as a tool for acquiring knowledge, participating in exchanges and breaking down divisive barriers. Yet, it is my firm belief that they underestimate the true nature and depth of the problem. Internet is in fact a whole new environment, a lifestyle forum, a place for doing business, exerting influence, for politics and confrontation, which we must control, make safe and defend. It is the resilience of our societies, our interests, our fundamental rights and our very democracy that are at stake, the future of France and Europe, a Europe which, if it fails to go digital, will die!

### Jean-Paul Paloméros

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Source : <http://blog.slideshare.net>

degree of international order has been established over the years, especially since the Second World War, via treaties, conventions and authoritative international organisations, first and foremost the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). However, nothing of the sort governs digital space, and any attempts so far in this direction have failed. This lack of equilibrium is accentuated by the central role of the large American internet companies. While they have complicated, sometimes extremely tense, relations with the US government in terms of access to confidential information and proprietary source codes<sup>4</sup>, there is no denying their interaction with the US administration for national security purposes. Among the major internet players, it is also worth mentioning the rise of China,

<sup>4</sup> The FBI's request to Apple regarding decryption of an iPhone following the San Bernardino shooting (2016)

<sup>5</sup> Use by "Cambridge Analytica" of metadata, particularly from Facebook, to target specific electors during the 2016 US presidential election.

# The growing importance of Gulf States in the Middle East

By **Bertrand Besancenot**,  
Senior Diplomatic Advisor to the French Government,  
Former Ambassador to Saudi Arabia and Qatar

At first glance, the topic selected for this conference may seem somewhat paradoxical, as the Gulf States have been criticised on various grounds, which can be summed up in 4 main points:

- there has been too much investment on our part for too little return,
- the Gulf States have allegedly lost some of their appeal because of the fall in crude oil prices, while other countries, such as Iran, would now appear more attractive,
- foreign policy in Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates is considered fiercely aggressive,
- they are accused of bankrolling Islamic terrorism.

The most commonly drawn conclusion is that our relationship with the Gulf States needs to be better balanced. More specifically, this means keeping well out of the conflict between Saudi Arabia and Iran. It also means laying down conditions for maintaining strategic partnerships with the Gulf States. And finally, it means stepping up discussions with Moscow and Teheran, especially since, for our industries, the Iranian market offers exciting prospects. All this is perfectly compatible with some of France's most recent diplomatic lines of thrust as laid down by its President. For instance, the departure of Bashar Al-Assad is no longer a prerequisite for negotiations over Syria.

Nowadays, the watchwords and objectives are **SECURITY**, **INDEPENDENCE** and **INFLUENCE**. Priority is of course given to the European Union, France being keen to collaborate more closely with Germany in rebuilding a European project. Other than this, France clearly has a particular interest in the Maghreb countries and in Africa. Whence the need to put the situation into perspective and to highlight several basic points:

**The first of these** is that, not so long ago, the Gulf States were under fire for being too "rich". They were particularly accused of "selfishness" over the Syrian refugee crisis. Strangely, with the slump in crude oil prices, there are those who now classify them as "poor" and thereby less worthy of interest. In reality, their GDP is the equivalent of two-thirds that of France, and half of that of the Middle East and North Africa region (MENA), including Israel and Iran. In addition, Saudi Arabia's GDP represents 50% of that of the countries of the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf (GCC). We should not forget that, in 2016, France's trade surplus with the Gulf States stood at five billion euros, a factor to be borne in mind given the state of France's trade deficit.

**Secondly**, it should not be forgotten that Gulf State wealth is a recent phenomenon, dating back only to 1973. Since then, these countries have progressed in leaps and bounds in an extremely short time, while other oil-rich countries like Iran, Iraq, Libya and Algeria were wasting their resources on domestic crises in which they are still embroiled.

**Thirdly, these countries are allies of the Western world.** For them, we remain a benchmark. Through their deliberate policy of keeping down oil prices, they have facilitated our

economic growth and prosperity. It would have been very different if Saudi Arabia had been headed, for example, by someone like Saddam Hussein, Khomeini or Gaddafi instead of the House of Saud. Similarly, in times of Islamic terrorism, what would happen if Mecca and Medina were under ISIS or Al-Qaeda control? Sweeping statements such as "Saudi Arabia is an Al-Qaeda hotbed!" should be avoided. Not that we should put the Gulf States on a pedestal: they are far from models of perfection. While things may be changing, their standards, as far as democracy and Human Rights are concerned, are miles away from ours.

**Fourthly**, while it is true to say that wealth is not equally distributed and that corruption does exist, this is also the case in many other countries.

**Fifthly**, the Gulf States have indeed "toyed" with Islamic terrorism. With Nasser, the Ba'ath party, the Muslim Brotherhood... even enjoying Western support at the time of the Islamic revolution in Iran, and against the Soviet Union in Afghanistan.

**To conclude**, although Wahhabism is sectarian, it is a religious and non-political doctrine. It is also true that Gulf money was used to spread Salafism across Africa, Asia, and Europe, which is something that we cannot easily swallow. On top of this, Gulf intervention in Yemen and the crisis with Qatar are both debatable, to say the least.

Of course, there are issues on which we are not in agreement with the Gulf States and these need to be addressed, as part of our strategic partnership with them. However, and this is the main thrust of my talk, the countries in this region are currently in a state of flux. Their role they play in the Arab world but also in international relations is increasingly important. The fact that **President Trump** chose to go to Riyadh for his first overseas visit should raise questions in the minds of those currently caricaturing these countries.

The growing power of the Gulf States is inexorably linked to their oil, gas, and financial wealth. It is also linked to the **failure of the "Arab Springs"** and to the crises plaguing many of the countries in the region. These make the Gulf States appear to be **oases of stability and development** in a troubled region. Egypt, especially, no longer plays its traditional leading role in the Arab world. Nowadays, the GCC's influence in both the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation and the Arab League is obvious. Riyadh has also succeeded in isolating Iran within the Muslim world.

Prospects in these countries remain very promising, especially in the security and defence fields. They have clearly understood the need for them to assume their regional responsibilities more directly, knowing that, while they now enjoy good relations with President Trump, they can no longer rely on the American "umbrella" under the same conditions as in the past.

## The growing importance of Gulf States in the Middle East

(Cont. from P. 6)

Prospects also exist within the general process of diversification of their economies. They are clearly determined to invest more in the private sector to lessen their oil-dependency. Extremely powerful family groups may indeed have an interest in participating in this diversification. The result may, for instance, be joint ventures with Western firms.

Especially for Saudi Arabia, it is important to highlight the very real efforts made with regard to diversification of foreign investment. May I remind you of the Public Investment Fund which aims at becoming the world's leading investment fund, with an amount of 2,000 billion dollars from the privatisations in the pipeline. The objective is for half of this amount to be invested abroad, rather than solely relying on American Treasury Bonds.

There are great opportunities awaiting countries ready to play the current game of economic reform, codenamed "Vision 2030" or "Visions 2030", since each country has its own vision.

This does not mean that the current international situation is a bed of roses for GCC countries:

- Iran's influence has spread across the Middle East, to their disadvantage,
- the Gulf States have failed to drive a wedge between Moscow and Teheran,
- Riyadh and Abu Dhabi are counting heavily on [President Trump](#), in spite of uncertainties over his foreign policy. In their eyes, he at least has the advantage of being anti-Iran and business-driven,

There also are rising tensions between Israel and Hezbollah, between Iraqi Kurdistan and neighbouring countries, which could seriously destabilise the area. Finally, the reforms underway to put an end to the "welfare state" are not only essential, in view of the 50% slump in incomes as a result of falling crude oil prices, they are also courageous. The impression is that these countries really want to tackle their problems head on. They want to embark on in-depth reforms that will completely change their social and economic models. But there should be no illusions with regard to the difficulty of implementing this type of programme, with all the social risks involved.

In conclusion, I have deliberately sought to keep my talk short in order to leave more time for debate. In recent years, France has indeed invested heavily in this region, taking advantage of the American withdrawal instigated by [President Obama](#), and has also managed to make the most of developments extremely unsettling for these countries.

Of course, the first thing that comes to mind is our base in Abu Dhabi and the fact Saudi Arabia was long our first, and is now our second most important arms sector client. Saudi Arabia is also our number one oil supplier. We are their third foreign investor. The returns we have obtained from this policy are highly substantial. These past three years, French companies have signed civilian contracts worth 27.5 billion and military contracts worth 7 billion euros with Saudi Arabia.

In the past, we had our Iraqi period, today it is Iran. Far from me to criticise our jockeying for position on a market that so clearly offers longer terms prospects. Yet, we have to be lucid about the difficulties of contracts negotiated in dollars, unlikely to be rapidly resolved.

By contrast, the Gulf States hold us in high regard. This should be encouragement enough not to fritter away our advantage.

We should, on the contrary, adapt to the region's new social and economic challenges. These countries are interested in forming joint ventures with companies, Western companies in particular. They want to develop new sectors such as health, education, tourism and culture. We therefore have some strong cards that we could play, especially in the training sector. Similarly, it is important to be able to seize the opportunities for investment by these countries in France.

Of course, this does not exclude making critical remarks on specific subjects, Human Rights, or funding Islamic radicalism, for example. But, once again, we must not let the USA, China, Korea, Japan, Italy and Spain take advantage of our hesitations.

For the last 18 months, we have been giving the impression of indecisiveness in our relations with these countries. Instead, we should be adopting a more proactive approach, seizing all possible opportunities for cooperation on markets which remain, despite what some may say, extremely promising, while, at the same time, seeking to strengthen our security, cooperation and exchanges on various issues, especially the funding of Islamic radicalism.

But, above all, we need to strengthen our influence in this strategic part of the world, where we have the good fortune still to have some strong cards to play.

### **QUESTIONS / ANSWERS**

**Q1:** [Could you please say a few words about the conflict between Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Qatar?](#)

I am bound to respect a measure of secrecy on this subject. The French President has entrusted me with a mission, which consists of assisting Kuwait in its mediator role. Our authorities require us to perform this mission in complete discretion. The Gulf States are too often thought of as one homogeneous group and it is indeed true that, culturally, they have very much in common. It is also, as they are well aware, in their best interest to join forces to a certain extent in the Gulf. But this does not, of course, mean that they do not have differences.

There is no denying that the United Arab Emirates and Qatar are at odds:

- Qatar failed to join the Emirates Federation in 1971;
- The former Emir of Qatar, Sheikh Hamad, overthrew his father in 1995 which, in a region as legitimist as this, was seen as a "high treason";
- Sheikh Hamad deliberately favoured strong proactive policies in a bid to affirm Qatari identity using the Al-Jazeera TV network and highly active diplomacy for the purpose. This naturally upstaged a certain big Emirate neighbour, which continues to bear a grudge;
- Finally, during the "Arab Spring", Qatar played a role that was not appreciated. Sheikh al-Qaradawi, a member of the Muslim brotherhood in the Emirate, managed to convince the former Emir he had a unique opportunity to put Qatar on the world map. The Muslim brothers were in the midst of setting up strongholds in all the countries where revolution was afoot with the intention of representing the "new Arab world". It was, therefore, in Qatar's interest to bankroll them to

## The growing importance of Gulf States in the Middle East

(Cont. from P. 7)

emerge later as their benefactor. The former Emir made no bones about this aim, which was not religious but strategic. Of course, the failure of the Muslim brothers in Egypt, to some extent in Tunisia, and definitely in Libya drove the former Emir into retirement. His son, Sheikh Tamim is a completely different type of person, more interested in business and the 2022 Football World Cup. There came a moment, therefore, when Qatar seemed to be back to "toeing the line".

During the Obama presidency, life went on relatively smoothly, for the Gulf States as a whole had the feeling that they had been abandoned by Americans preferring to tilt at windmills with Iran. The Gulf States therefore papered over their differences, in particular on the contentious issue of the funding of the Muslim Brotherhood and other movements. The Saudis and Emiratis strongly supported Trump's candidacy. They were hoping that the traditional Gulf State protector would be back. The Qataris made the opposite decision by widely supporting Hillary Clinton. As long as this remained private, it did not matter too much. But when Al-Jazeera began declaring "this man is insane and will be the cause of war in the region", trouble began. The measures taken in retaliation seem excessive to me, but they bear the mark of Sheikh Mohammed Bin Zayed, a spirited individual keen to make Qatar less influential. On the other hand, Sheikh Hamad and, to a lesser extent his son, have always been mavericks with a liking for confrontation.

This situation has created real problems for the local populations. Prices have gone up and there are restrictions on travel. There are many family links between Qatar and Saudi Arabia, in particular, which makes the current situation awkward. Qatar's economy is suffering, which is undermining Football World Cup organisation. Objectively speaking, only Iran benefits from this crisis, but it has primarily made Sheikh Tamim more legitimate in the eyes of his own people. In this situation, there are only losers. There are, of course, deeply rooted reasons, but it is not only bulls locking horns. The Kuwaitis bravely started a mediation process but little has been achieved so far. The Emir of Kuwait, the "father of the Gulf Cooperation Council", considers himself the region's elder statesman, capable of talking to anyone. The Americans are the best placed to break the deadlock but, in the end, the solution can only come from the Gulf States themselves. This is why the French President has asked me to help the Kuwaitis with their mediation.

**Q2:** Could you inform us about the conflict in Yemen?

The Al Nahyan ruling family in the Emirates is Yemeni. In Yemen, there is a considerable difference between North and South: the South is completely Sunni, and since all the Southern elites fled to Jeddah, they now have very particular relations with the Gulf States. Lastly, there is the feeling that Iran is trying to take advantage of the situation, a view shared in Riyadh. These are three reasons to explain the intervention of the Emirates in Yemen. It was also an opportunity for them to confirm their military abilities in the field, since up until then, their capabilities were only known on paper or by a handful of experts.

**Q3:** For decades now, relations between the Gulf States and the US have been rather bizarre. China, a new player on the international scene, is putting pressure on and contesting the current hegemony. China is gaining ground in Asia of course,

but also in Africa and Europe... what about the Gulf States, and more specifically, Saudi Arabia?

At the moment, the Chinese are very active on the economic and trade front in the Gulf States, especially Saudi Arabia, where it is their main trading partner. Each has invested in the other's petrochemical industry. The Chinese have their eyes on Saudi crude oil, as they have on Iranian oil. Until now, China has not really been politically active in the region, always going along with the Russian vote. However, the day the Gulf States start to turn towards Asia, their primary market, as the process of opening up new Silk Road trade routes gains in momentum, the Chinese will be positioned to play a greater political role, doing it their way, in other words, discreetly, little by little.

**Q6:** How do the Gulf States view the European Union? And, vice versa, how do the European Union institutions perceive this part of the world?

A very pertinent question. In the Gulf, Europe is virtually non-existent! First and foremost because Brussels, and more specifically the European Parliament, is violently hostile towards the Gulf States. They are deemed too rich and undemocratic. The ambassadors in the region have requested visits from Commission and Council authorities, but these pleas have fallen on deaf ears. On the issue of Human Rights, we have suggested specific, discreet but potentially effective measures. We have never had a reply. By contrast, there have been public votes in the European Parliament, the only upshot of which has been to exasperate the Gulf States. Conversely, the Gulf States reason in terms of "real power". When the subject of Europe crops up, they always reply that France is in the political driving seat, that the UK has always been there and that Germany is the real economic power. They have no real understanding of what the EU and the notion of shared sovereignty are really about. At the same time, we have made no effort to explain these concepts. For over twenty years, plans for a Free Trade Agreement between the EU and the Gulf Cooperation Council have been in the pipeline. In this agreement we included articles on Human Rights and they added articles excluding certain sectors, crude oil, for example. We can hope that, with the new French President's commitment to the European cause, progress will be made. European MP, Michèle Alliot Marie, is also a strong ally. She is also Chair of the European Parliament's EU-GCC Friendship Group, which has similar objectives.

**Q8:** What are current relations between the Gulf States and Israel?

Informal relations have long existed between Qatar and Israel, the Emirates and Israel and Saudi Arabia and Israel. In relation to Iran, there is an obvious commonality of interests. The authorities of the Gulf States have no problem with regard to the existence of the State of Israel, but they are well aware that the issue of Palestine is fundamental to the Arab "psyche". Any leader giving the impression of abandoning this quintessential Arab cause would be in an impossible position.

King Abdullah himself once proposed a peace initiative in Beirut, promising full recognition of Israel as long as the State of Palestine remained within the 1967 borders, albeit with slight modifications. As long as this situation has not been completely clarified, the countries in the region are not going to change their official position one iota.

# Defence : Europe's awakening

By Jean-Dominique Giuliani

Chairman of the Robert Schuman Foundation

Welcome by Patrick Bellouard, Major General (Engineer, retired), President of EuroDéfense-France.

Today, it is our pleasure and honour to welcome Jean-Dominique Giuliani, Chairman of the Robert Schuman Foundation.

A graduate of the Institute of Political Studies in Aix-en-Provence (France), his functions over the years have included:

- Member of the International Relations Department at the French Ministry of Agriculture (1979)
- Secretary General of the Centrist Union group in the French Senate (1983)
- Chief of Staff of René Monory, President of the French Senate (1992-1998)
- One of the founders and Director of the Robert Schuman Foundation (1992)
- Master of Requests for the Council of State (1995)
- Director of the SOFRÈS Institute (1998-2001)
- Chairman of the Board of the Robert Schuman Foundation (since 2000)



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As an auditor of the Institute of Higher Studies in National Defence (IHEDN), he is currently a Navy Reserve Captain. He has published numerous works, most of which have focused on European issues, notably:

*"Pourquoi et comment l'Europe restera le cœur du monde"* (Why and how Europe will remain the centre of the world) (2014)

And most recently:

*"Défense, le réveil de l'Europe"* (Defence: Europe's Awakening) (22 May 2018)

Thank you very much, President, Ladies and Gentlemen.

It is a great pleasure for me to be here with you this morning and to share some of my own personal views with you. Given the quality of the members of your association, with which I have long been familiar, these can only be my very modest contribution.

Many of you have helped make what is happening today at European Union (EU) level possible. Together with Arnaud Danjean and Françoise Grossetête, Member of the European Parliament and Rapporteur for the European Defence Fund (EDF) at the European Parliament, we have published an article on our foundation's website, which we had no hesitation in entitling: "Defence: Europe's Awakening".

This document is the result of a very long process and a series of developments that culminated in a number of innovations in 2018, which have however yet to be confirmed.

Since the Second World War, Europe has been trying to find ways of organising its defence. Previously, Europe relied solely on NATO, which protected it during the Cold War and did everything within its power to continue to do so afterwards, at least in terms of territorial defence. French efforts and European attempts to make Europe a pillar of Atlantic defence have all consistently foundered on the EU's internal contradictions, especially as itself it was expanding at the same time.

There was, of course, the European Defence Community (EDC), which was rejected by the French Parliament in 1957, whose brainchild it was at the outset.

Various European treaties, the Maastricht Treaty for example, have attempted to put a common diplomacy and defence in place.

In reality, however, the EU has never been able to find the internal consensus that would enable it to take major steps towards joint funding of European capabilities and non-civilian or civilian/military operational missions.

There are, of course, exceptions, such as some missions in Africa, but of the 23 current EU missions, most of them are civilian. These are useful as part of an overall strategy which can be agreed upon at European level. It is essentially a strategy to support reconstruction, training and even peacekeeping but rarely includes combat operations.

While there may have been some notable exceptions, these have most often been because of the character of the persons in charge and their ability to convince.

This is, therefore, a very long process fraught with frustration and uncertainty. It has, however, slowly enabled developments to take shape, as a result of which the EU is today not totally without resources.

These include:

- Creation of the European External Action Service (EEAS);
- Development of a European Security Strategy (drawn up in 2003, then submitted to minor modifications in 2008);
- Establishment of a diplomatic corps across 130 embassies around the world, and
- A common staff that, while it does not bear the name, already enables external operations to be coordinated, even if for the time being these are purely civilian.

## Defence : Europe's awakening

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All of this brings us to the end of 2013, when there was a growing awareness among the Heads of State and Government, faced with a changing strategic context, of the increasingly worrying and urgent situations right at our borders. They, therefore, decided to accelerate the EU's diplomatic and military response. At one of its meetings, the European Council laid the groundwork for more organised defence and made provision for at least one annual meeting of Heads of State and Government on the subject. It was at this point that a number of programmes such as the MALE drone and more specific forms of cooperation started to appear, all this culminating at the end of 2017 with the emergence of the much-debated Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO), which now features as part of the treaty.

PESCO (December 2017) came about through the rapprochement of France and Germany led by their respective Ministers, Jean-Yves Le Drian and Ursula von der Leyen and took the form of the pooling of some of their military air transport resources. Combining our albeit modest resources in this way was also intended to make up for some of our shortcomings in this respect. This rapprochement also acted as a political trigger that led several other Member States to come on board, not wishing to be left out.

And now, surprise, surprise, PESCO is an association of 25 Member States, excluding the UK, Denmark and Malta, the latter being neutral.

At the same time, the European Commission, at the timely instigation of Jean-Claude Juncker, has put forward a number of highly opportune proposals. Recognising the concern shown for defence and security issues by the citizens of its Member States, the Commission has proposed its defence action plan and launched its European Defence Fund (EDF) as well as other instruments, which I will come back to later.

At a time when our budgets are all feeling the pinch, this EDF is ultimately an effective way of encouraging governments and industries to look into ways of pooling their cooperation efforts.

We should not forget the recent crisis in Ukraine, which caused great concern among some of our partners in Central and Eastern Europe. Russian revisionism is very worrying. The Russian Air Force is constantly testing Europe's reactions and defence. French troops are currently stationed in Estonia as part of NATO's "Reassurance" operation.

The beginning of 2018 is therefore a period when various European instruments are coming to fruition at the same time as Member States are demonstrating their willingness to respond.

The European Parliament is going to approve the EDF regulation. This may not be revolutionary in itself, but it will pave the way for European funding for defence capabilities for the very first time (a novelty in itself). In the budget presented on 2 March by the European Commission for the next 7 years, 13 billion euros are to be earmarked for the EDF over this period to finance both parts, namely research and capability development. This may not change the face of the world, but it is the first time that it will be possible for European funding to be granted to projects, provided that they involve at least 2 firms from a minimum of 3 Member States.

While the mechanisms remain somewhat complicated, this is still completely revolutionary.

The Commission has no real powers over defence issues and it is forbidden by the European treaties from having such powers.

The European Parliament has even less power. May I remind you that each Member State is represented by at least six members, the maximum being 96 for Germany. France, for its part, is very poorly represented. Even the composition of the Parliament is somewhat "distorted". It has a "Northern", female, anti-militarist and predominately pacifist bias and a strong "green" or ecological bent, which make it a forum where it is very difficult to talk about sovereign issues.

The project follows two research projects carried out over the past two years, which served to test more regular, sustainable and substantial ways of financing common military capabilities from the European budget.

I would like to remind you very briefly of the measures put in place:

Each year, Member States are to meet to review their capability needs and exchange details of their current situation within the PESCO framework, each recognising that defence expenditure must amount to at least 2% of their GDP. They will try to develop some joint projects. The EDA will coordinate and provide the secretariat for these annual reviews, thereby returning to its former role, long denied by the UK.

As a result, ministers and senior military leaders will be virtually obliged to meet on very frequent occasions.

At the same time, the EDF, which we hope will have a budget of around 9 billion euros over seven years for capability development, will finance projects involving at least 3 Member States. For Member States participating in the PESCO, up to 30% of their total project investment may be funded from the EU budget, but the remainder is their sole responsibility.

The fact that projects carried out under the banner of European cooperation have to be funded to the tune of 80% by the Member States, is already a weakness in itself. If the particular project falls within the framework of the PESCO, then this figure drops to only 70% and there will be a structure, at both Commission and Agency levels, for examining applications in order to verify the compatibility of such investments and with prior review by the Ministers.

Two research and development instruments have also been established.

Through the Horizon 2020 programme, the EU is allocating a larger share of its budget to research, including research for dual-use or military purposes. The Juncker plan aims to take research funding further by dedicating more than 4 billion euros to it over 7 years.

This is a small window of opportunity for industrial firms, backed by government, to work together to develop demonstrators and pilot projects. Earlier, I mentioned the example of the MALE drone, but the Franco-German project for a future fighter aircraft, a future air system, should also benefit from this funding.

## Defence : Europe's awakening

(Cont. from P. 10)

### **Current Strengths and weaknesses:**

#### **Strengths:**

- 1- This is a **real** innovation, a **real** demonstration of political will.
- 2- France's role is quite significant. I will be coming back to this later.
- 3- As usual, the driving force behind the process is the Franco-German tandem and they have managed to draw others along in their wake.

The Germans are showing real determination, even if it is very difficult for governments to go too far along this road. Public opinion is particularly reluctant to encourage engagement in anything that could lead to external operations.

The current state of the Bundeswehr (German army) suggests a degree of *laissez-aller*, to the great despair of the soldiers themselves. It is a "parliamentary army" muzzled by a constitution designed to curb it and under pressure from public opinion that is anti-military to say the least.

I would also add that the German Minister of Defence, francophone and Francophile, Ursula von der Leyen, fully understands that Germany must assume its European and global responsibilities, which are more than just economic.

Less than a month ago, this resulted in the signature at the Berlin Air Show of a first memorandum on developing and building the future joint combat air system under French leadership. The project will be spearheaded by Dassault Aviation, in partnership with Airbus. I would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to its President who recently passed away. Airbus is also leading the development and construction of the MALE drone together with Dassault and Italian company, Leonardo.

All this is not purely symbolic. As you are aware, the Chief of Staff of the German Air Force came out in favour of purchasing the F35 to replace the Tornados, which ended up costing him his job. Moreover, there is currently strong pressure from the US, on Belgium for example, but also elsewhere, to prevent any form of EU strategic autonomy.

4- The Commission is "playing the game". The EEAS is much more active under Mrs. Mogherini's authority than under her British predecessor, a contention evident from its stance on the Iran issue, in the publication of a more detailed European strategic review, in the strategic reviews of maritime and internal security, as well as on many other occasions. These European institutions are now increasingly in the driving seat in a bid to cater to public expectations!

#### **Weaknesses:**

1- The American position. I believe that it is not in the US's interest for Europe to develop its own strategic autonomy. This should prompt greater awareness of just how much the US gets out of NATO in industrial and financial terms, despite what the American President said during his campaign, which we failed to contradict. NATO is 70% funded by the Americans because of the financial returns and there is no denying the amounts at stake. When, during his campaign, Donald Trump declared that NATO was "obsolete and too expensive", the Atlantic Council, a small American organisation, published an exhaustive account of all that NATO members paid back to the United States. I remember, for example, that the Europeans

paid up to 49 billion euros for the Afghanistan campaign, which went into the pockets of the US military.

We must work to raise more public awareness about these amounts, if only to re-establish a proper balance in our relationship, a relationship naturally based on our privileged ally status, not one of domination.

In this respect, the NATO Secretary General's statements, following those made by the Europeans on the PESCO, clearly insinuated that the EDF should not be limited to European industry but also accessible to American firms. It is a pity that neither General de Gaulle, nor Mitterrand, nor Chirac were there to put him in his place, or even take disciplinary action against him.

All this is revelatory of the very real pressure being exerted by the Americans. And this pressure is bound to weigh on some members, particularly those that have recently regained their sovereignty, and who suffered badly during the occupation under Soviet regime, and whose security absolutely cannot be guaranteed by the EU, at least for the time being. Just consider the Poles who did everything in their power to ensure that US troops were stationed in their country. Or the Baltic States, where it is easy to understand the effects of this pressure. And the same may be said of other Central and Eastern European countries.

Officially, the Americans claim to be very pleased that Europe has decided to renew its defence strategy.

Unofficially, they think quite the reverse and are acting in their own economic interests, which are fundamentally opposed. Is the EU really determined to take responsibility for and ensure its long-term strategic autonomy, while remaining a privileged ally of the United States?

2- Europeans must **attest** to their willingness to organise themselves, not only financially but also politically!

Financially speaking, this is not, and will not, be easy! Negotiations will have to be carried out over the financial *prospects* for the 2021-2027 period, in other words over a 7-year multiannual programme for the European budget. You have probably already heard farmers protesting about the cuts in their subsidies and others who are very worried about the regional structural funds, at a time when we are threatening to limit the development funds granted to Poland and Hungary, if they fail to respect the rule of law. In short, these negotiations have all the signs of being extremely complex, and their outcome will show whether or not Europe is experiencing a true awakening in terms of defence.

13 billion euros have been earmarked for the EDF for security and defence as well as various investments in other joint projects. On top of this, at the request of Mrs. Mogherini, 10 billion euros have been budgeted to support EU external operations, such as EUTM-Mali, which now apparently needs substantial resources to train the G5-Sahel armies, and to train coastguards in Somalia. A smaller but still significant budget of 6.5 billion euros has also been proposed by NATO to support strategic mobility in Europe, given that, for example, the strategic movement of troops and supplies in Europe (via existing roads, bridges and railways) is not as simple as in the US.

Over the next 7 years, the EU will also be spending some 120 billion euros on external action such as its Neighbourhood,

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Development and International Cooperation Instruments, which is no modest amount!

Of this 120 billion budget, more than 30 billion euros will be allocated to the European Development Fund, which is an integral part of the European budget. This will serve to strengthen EU aids. In the Sahel, for example, these funds will be used to train police officers, customs officials and soldiers, in particular in ways of stopping the flow of illegal immigrants at local level. Similar training has already been provided in Niger with a relatively high degree of success. However, this comes at a price.

Nor will it be easy from a political point of view, not least because there remain considerable differences in terms of strategy and vision. I have already mentioned Germany, its constitution and its post-Second World War traditions. There is a real determination to make progress and move forward by exploiting complementarity while making due allowance for this partner's limitations and constraints. Nevertheless, whether it be between Member States, the North-South divide, or the East-West divide, differences and divergences of opinion still exist. It is difficult to persuade some members to accept or even take an overall, global strategy into account. The people in charge are in favour of the concept, but when they have to convince public opinion, it is quite another story. It is very difficult to explain why it is necessary to play a role in the Sahel and on all the world's oceans to protect and promote the EU's interests. Global trade is currently under threat, for example, in certain straits, and China also constitutes a highly active and menacing force in other places. The situation is the exactly the same in Brazil. Which is why a reminder to Turkey and other countries of some of the facts of life would not go amiss.

**There is still a great deal of work to be done to bring our ideas and strategic visions into line!**

It is, essentially, for this reason that the French President is championing what he calls the European Intervention Initiative (E2I), as announced in his keynote speech at the Sorbonne on 26 September 2017. The aim of this initiative is to strengthen operational cooperation between those Member States ready and willing to volunteer, without creating new structures. To date, about 10 Member States have expressed an interest in this joint military project, although the official announcement is only due in about three weeks. The idea behind this initiative is to strengthen cooperation at our respective CPCO (National Operations Planning Command and Control Centres) level. It consists not only of increasing the number of liaison officers but also of staging joint military training so that all parties are operationally ready to carry out joint operations, with common operational headquarters, and troops that can be called immediately into action.

It would also address one of our other current weaknesses, which is that of all too frequently giving priority to capability over operational development. Yet it is only normal that the European Commission should talk about industry and trade as

they both fall within its field of competence. In terms of defence, there are certainly gaps in capability, which can and should be overcome. But, above all, what matters is the necessary DETERMINATION.

What France is about to propose seems very intelligent to me. It is not simply another structure but a case of learning from what has happened over the past two years in the context of operation "Reassurance" in Eastern Europe in relation to Russia. France, for example, sent troops to Estonia on a NATO training exercise, and today Estonian troops are stationed in Mali. For a small country like Estonia, in demographic terms, and given its regional context, it is not easy to explain the reasons for sending a contingent of special forces to Mali to the public. Believe me. Yet, the proposal was adopted by the Estonian Parliament and the troops duly despatched.

### **I shall conclude by saying:**

- Europe's awakening has begun.
- This has yet to be confirmed.
- For France, it is a matter of great importance, since our military forces, our industries, our chain of command and our constitution all place us at the forefront as regards defence.
- President Macron's stance in this respect is an asset for Europe.
- It is vital that we should exploit these skills and this position at the vanguard of current developments, while remaining lucid, since the process is bound to be slow, by throwing ourselves whole-heartedly into the game.
- I believe that this will be to the greater benefit of our overall, common and national interests.



The document below is available in full on the Robert Schuman Foundation web site:

**European Issue No. 474 : "Defence : Europe's awakening"**  
by clicking [here](#)

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